THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir. India Meteorological Department, based on the new statistical model predicted that the 2007 southwest seasonal (June to september) rainfall over the country is likely to be 5 per cent less than the long period average (LPA) (LPA:89 cm based on 1941-1990.data). This forecast was made based on the data up to March, 2007.

(b) Yes, Sir. It is true that several international meteorological institutes in US, UK and Europe have predicted above-average monsoon over India for the 2007 southwest monsoon season.

(c) and (d) These institutes prepare forecasts based on coupled ocean-atmosphere dynamical models, using initial data of April. They also take into account the EL-nino La Nina conditions. The dynamical models have reached the accuracy level of prediction of 7 days and research work is going on to increase it to 10 days in nothern latitudes. However, the dynamical models do not give accurate forecasts in long term. However, some scientists in these institutes are trying to see whether the dynamical model will give reasonable accuracy due to averaging effects. This will take many years to prove or disprove.

IMD forecast is based on statistical method. A new method has been developed this year which gives in improved accuracy. IMD has more confidence in its synoptic and statistical methods for long range forecast than forecasts from these institutes that have stared these forecasts only recently.

IMD will be issuing an updated forecast in June based on observation data up to May, 2007. More information on the evolution of sea surface temperature (SST) conditions (La Nina conditions) over the Pacific Ocean will be known by them.

Funds for education of Muslim Community

*551. SHRI ABDUL WHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a huge amount has been earmarked for the eudcation of persons belonging to Muslim Community;

(b) whether any detailed plan has been chalked out in this regard; and

(c) if so, the status of the Plan?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c) No such earmarked allocation has been made except under the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme for introducing modern subjects in Madarsas volunteering to do so. An action plan to address issues of educational backwardness among the Muslim Community pointed out by the "Sachar" Committee is under consideration.

Students dropping out due to ragging

*552. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of students who drop out due to ragging every year from different institutions in the country;

(b) whether Government propose to bring ragging within the criminal law; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c) No information is maintained by the Government regarding the percentage of students dropping out due to ragging every year from different institutions.

Offences, *inter alia* those, affecting public tranquillity, decency, morals, the human body and property, as well as those relating to criminal intimidation and insult, whether committed as a part of 'ragging' or otherwise, are already punishable under the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Report of the committee of secretaries

*553. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE : Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision on the report of the Committee of Secretaries, which was appointed by her Ministry at the direction of Prime Minister;

(b) whether the Committee has suggested any increase in remuneration;

(c) whether the Committee has suggested any 'parting gift' to retired Anganwadi workers; and